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The Mace Conducts Study to Better Serve ODU Students

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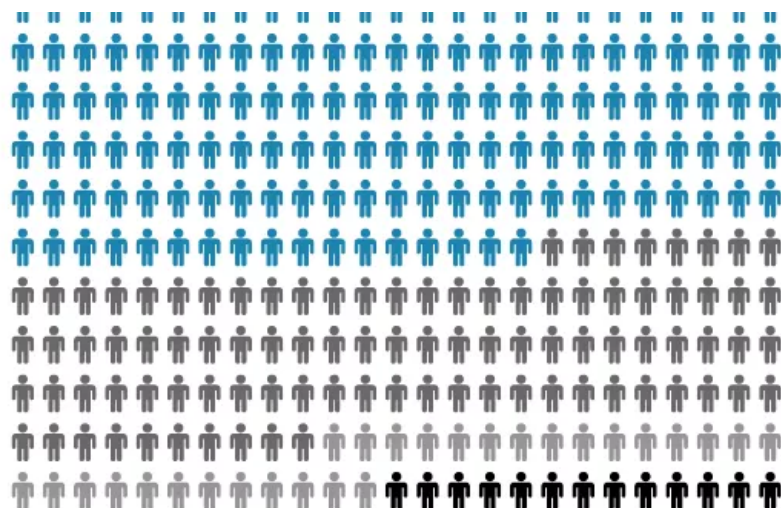
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MACE & CROWN

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY STUDENT NEWSPAPER - EST. 1930

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The Mace Conducts Study to Better Serve ODU Students



Letter From the Editor

Jugal Patel
Digital Editor

The Mace & Crown is approaching its organization's 85th year of serving the campus community. With that in mind, we feel we can do better to continue finding ways to improve as an organization.

During the course of the Fall 2014 semester, we implemented a number of measures to better serve the student body. Of these initiatives, we partnered with Old Dominion University's [Social Science Research Center](#) to conduct survey research and better understand our audience. We'd like to keep students central to our content strategy. This means we want to understand what you think about the organization, what kind of content you'd like to see, and how you prefer to use various mediums to get information. Based upon the information provided through responses, we can now use quantified data to inform our decision-making, in hopes to convey information that upholds both the principals of community and higher journalistic standards.

The data collected from student responses are representative of ODU's undergraduate population of 20,000 students with a 6.4% margin of error.

Some of the interesting things we found from the study are that ODU students don't read newspapers too often— as if that were a surprise. Many of you rely on the internet and social media for news and information. Our study found that almost 90% of ODU undergrads own a smartphone and are increasingly reaching news while on computers or on the move. To account for this, the Mace started ramping up its digital operations. This semester we redesigned our website, built up our social media presence (especially on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)) and started thinking critically about the visual presentation of our stories.

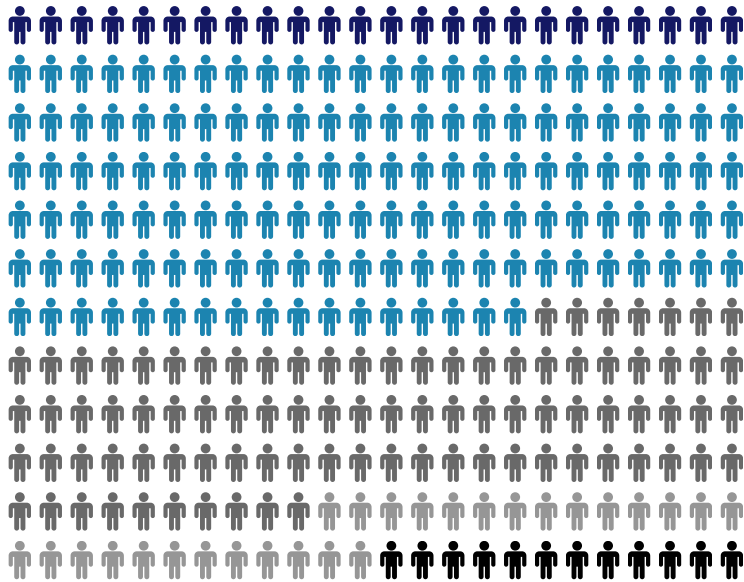
We also found that about 72% of you wanted to see crime covered. This year, we made crime a larger priority, regularly publishing both campus and community crime logs, and publishing a comprehensive story on a contextual view of crime at ODU.

See where ODU Students stand on the issues

Finally, we wanted to see where ODU undergrads stand on relevant issues. We asked students what they think about the university administration's increased effort to address crime, parking and sexual assault on campus. Our data also revealed that 75.7% of students agreed with the statement that ODU should invest more money into academics than athletics and 63.9% of students agreed that ODU is already feeling the effects of climate change and sea level rise.

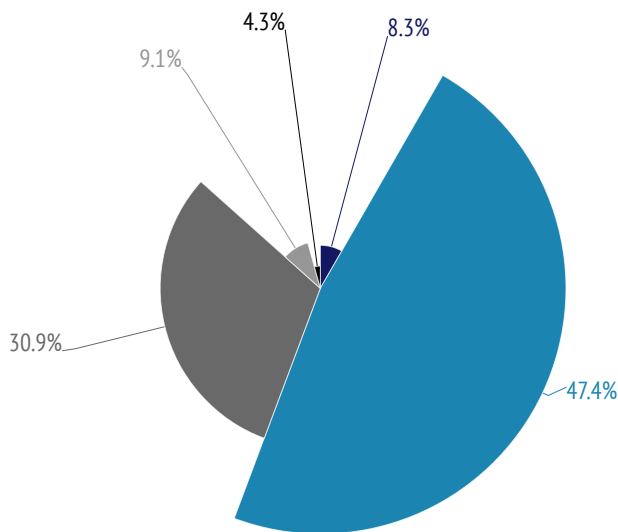
Take a look at the full results for responses on issues:

ODU is doing enough to address crime - Student Responses



Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

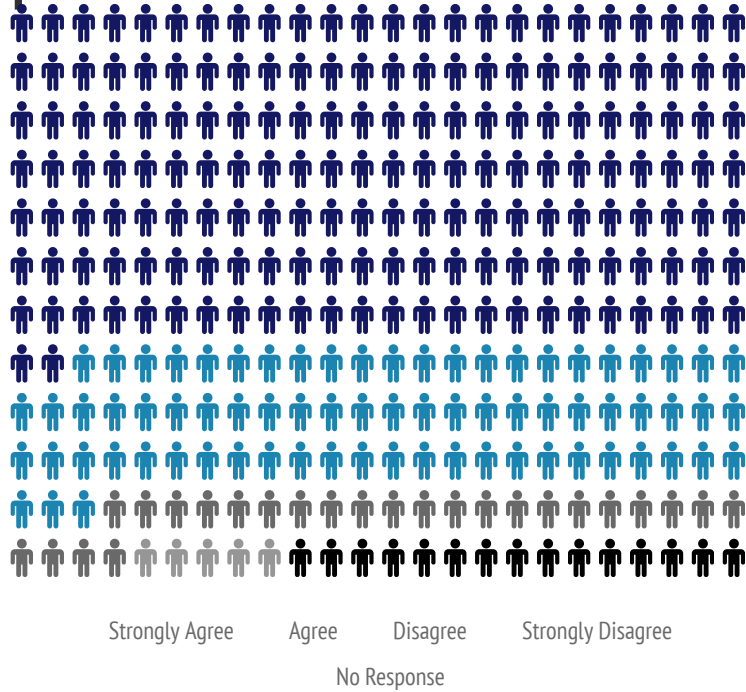
 **1=180 Students**



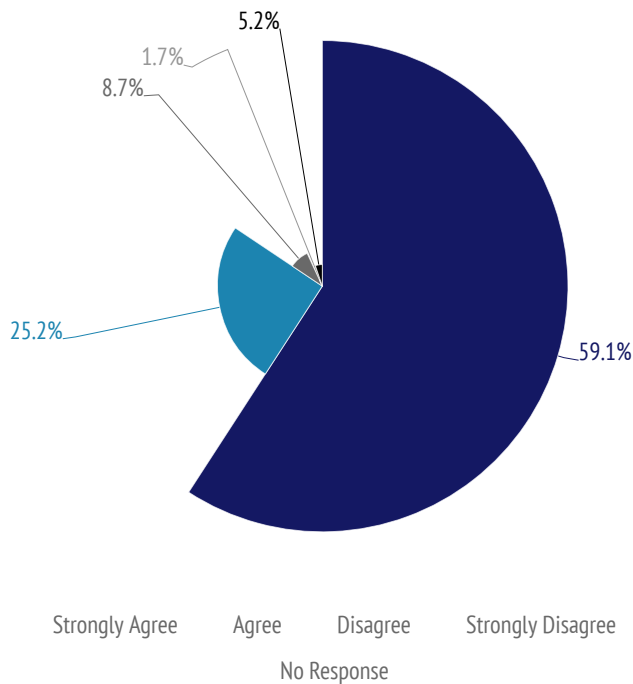
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

Source: 2014 Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Data

ODU needs to do more to address parking on campus - Student Responses

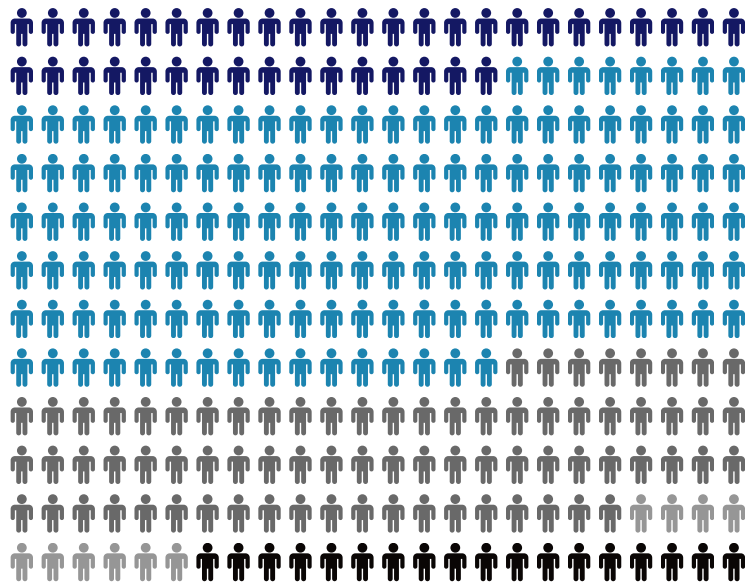


 1=178.5 Students



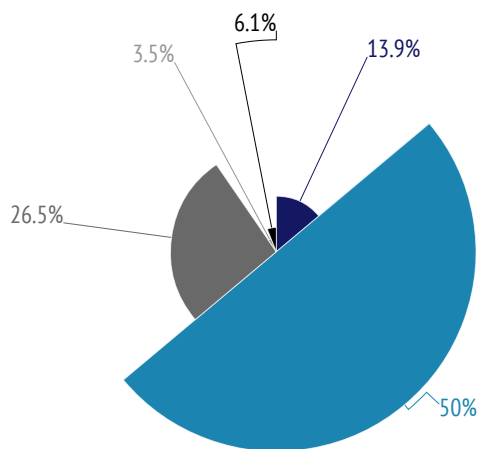
Source: 2014 Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Study

ODU is already feeling the effects of climate change- Student Responses



Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

 **1=178.5 Students**



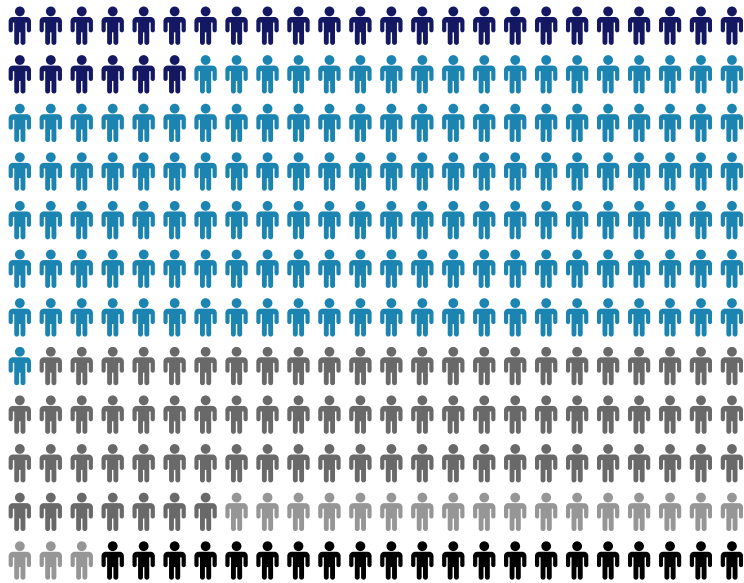
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

Source: Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Study

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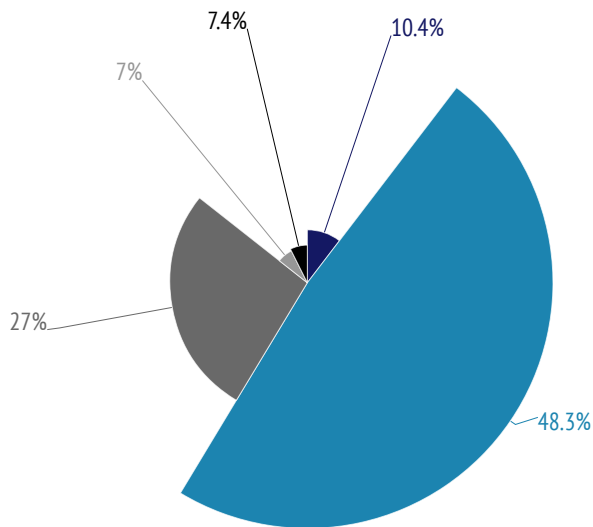
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ODU is doing enough to address sexual assault on campus



Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

 **1=178.5 Students**



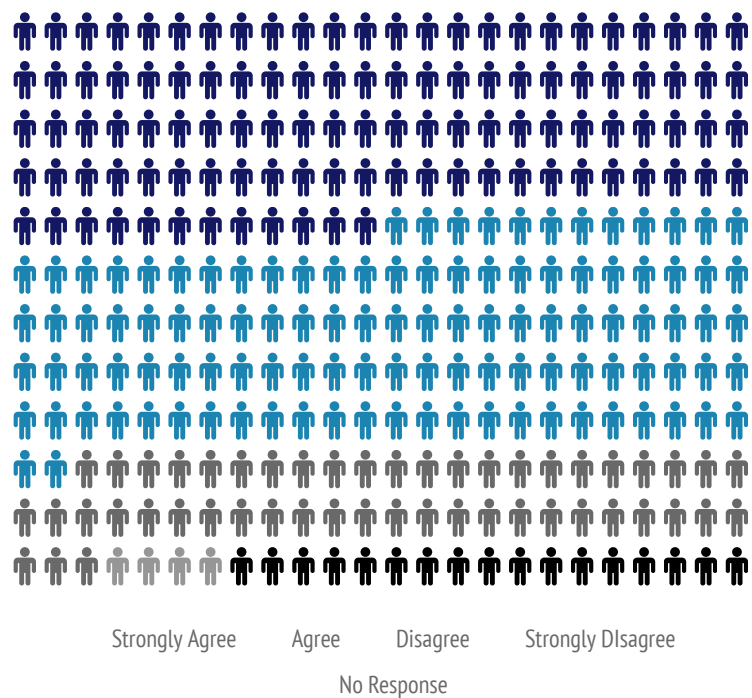
Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree
No Response

Source: 2014 Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Study

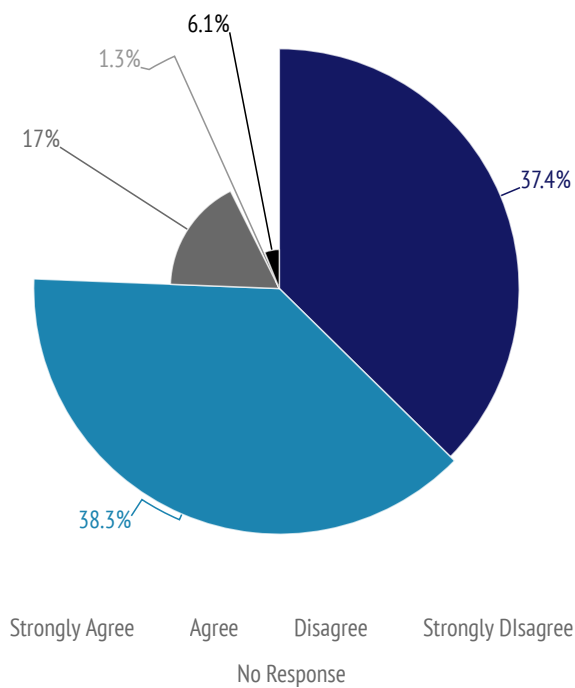
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ODU should invest more money into academics than athletics - Student Responses

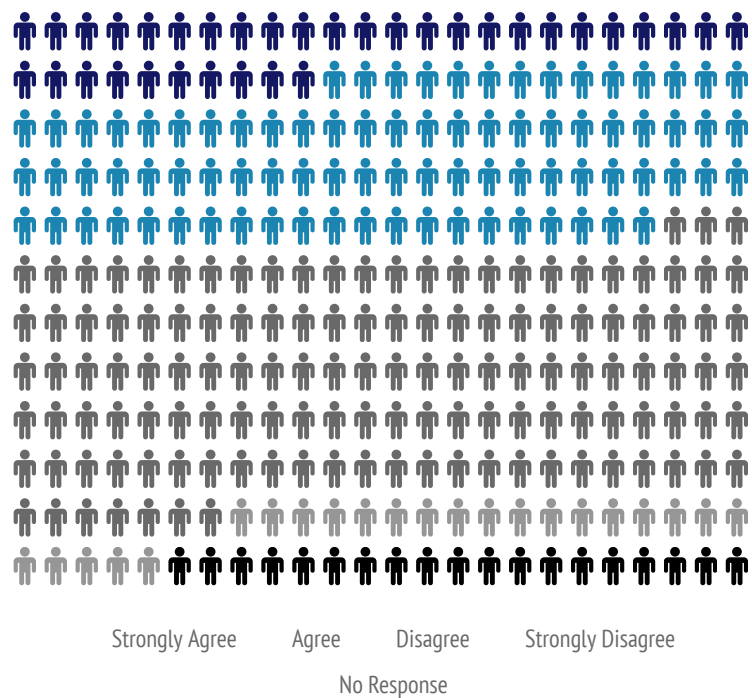


 1=178.5 Students

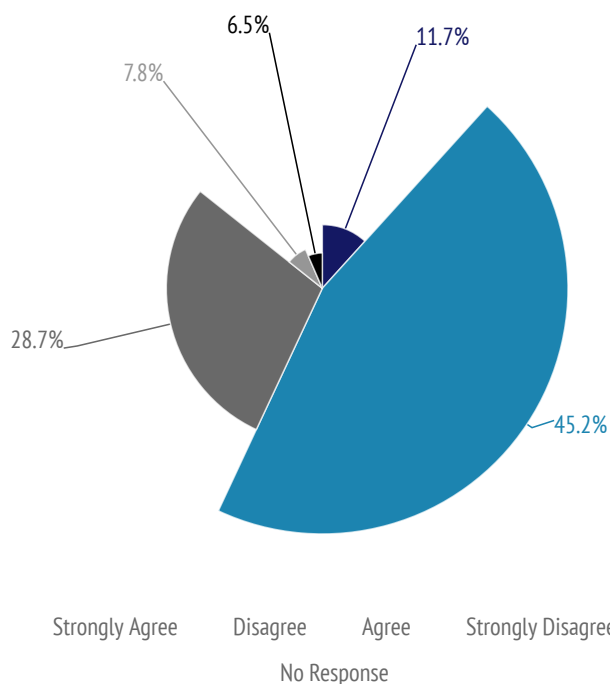


Source: 2014 Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Study

ODU should discontinue investments in fossil fuels - Student Responses



 1=178.5 Students



Source: 2014 Mace & Crown Audience Demographic Study

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The sample for this study was a random sample of ODU students. Each undergraduate student had an equal probability of being chosen for the sample and inferences can therefore be made from those chosen to the whole ODU undergraduate population. The random sample of 2,000 undergraduate students was obtained from the University. These students were emailed an invitation to complete the online study designed by the Mace & Crown Editorial Board. Students who completed the survey were redirected to a page where they could enter their contact information for a drawing of one of three prizes. The questions were aimed to gauge students' media consumption behavior, preferences for Mace & Crown coverage and standing on multiple issues. About one week later, an email reminder was sent to all students thanking those who participated and reminding those who did not to consider completing the survey. Finally, a final reminder was sent the day that the data collection was due to end. A total of 230 students completed the survey. Based on a total ODU student population of 25,000 the calculated margin of error for the data is 6.4%.

– Tancy Vandecar Burdin: Associate Director, ODU Social Science Research Center

– Jugal Patel: Digital Editor, Mace & Crown News